



United States Senate

May 19, 2022

James C. McKenna
President and CEO
Pacific Maritime Association
555 Market Street, Third Floor
San Francisco, California 94105

William E. Adams
President
International Longshore and
Warehouse Union
1188 Franklin Street, 4th Floor
San Francisco, California 94109

Dear Mr. McKenna and Mr. Adams,

I urge the Pacific Maritime Association (PMA) and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) to ensure that a mutually beneficial labor contract is in place before a work slowdown or stoppage can occur. The economic outlook of the United States, and the well-being of thousands of workers at the ports and depending on port operations, rests in part on your ability to achieve this goal.

As you well know, California's ports have been overwhelmed for more than a year by COVID-related increases in demand, workforce shortages, and supply chain disruptions. Nearly three-fourths of the ILWU's 22,000 workers are employed at the California Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, through which more than 30 percent of U.S. containerized waterborne trade flow. During the COVID-19 pandemic, these ports experienced a 20 percent surge in imports, and the resulting bottlenecks caused weeks and months of delays for shipments to U.S. retailers, manufacturers, and farmers. I am proud that California's essential dock workers processed these imports while much of the rest of the country was working from home, and despite health-related labor shortages.

I have worked hard to support the ports, port workers, and the maritime industry by increasing congressional investments in port infrastructure, capacity, and technologies, including at West Coast ports. As an example, enclosed is a recent letter I sent to 13 major ocean carriers to relieve supply chain backlogs, export agriculture products, and help combat the worldwide food crisis.

A work slowdown or stoppage later this year would exacerbate global supply chain disruptions that are a significant cause of high inflation and economic uncertainty. We must avoid this outcome. As leaders of the ILWU and the PMA, I urge you to engage in good-faith negotiations to ensure that your members reach a fair, long-term agreement. I am available to provide any assistance that may be useful in resolving this situation.

Sincerely,



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

Attachment: Letter from Senators Feinstein and Padilla to ocean carriers (May 4, 2022)

cc: The Honorable Marty Walsh, Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor